



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michelle Hinchey

## Hinchey Bill Launching First Statewide Review of Traumatic Brain Injury Care in New York Signed into Law

MICHELLE HINCHEY January 2, 2025



### Bill Inspired by Hudson Valley Family's Fight for Local Services

**ALBANY, NY** – Senator Michelle Hinchey today announced that her bill to improve access to services for New Yorkers with Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI) has been signed into law. The bill, S.1478/A.7215, inspired by the challenges faced by former Ulster County resident Hannah Berryan and her mother, Katherine, will be the first statewide review of TBI care in New York.

At 16, Hannah Berryan was severely injured in a car accident, resulting in a life-changing TBI

that now requires 24-hour care. In 2021, Hinchey's office worked closely with the Berryans to find care for Hannah in the Hudson Valley; however, due to a lack of local options, Hannah has had to move out of state. Her mother, Katherine, remains in Ulster County, where she continues to advocate for her daughter and TBI survivors across New York.

To support families like the Berryans, Hinchey's legislation directs the New York State **TBI Services Coordinating Council** to develop recommendations related to TBI care, including reviewing the availability and accessibility of services, regional disparities, emerging trends in TBI, differences in services and outcomes for New Yorkers served by various TBI programs, and efficiency of service administration. The recommendations are required to be completed within a year and posted on the New York State Department of Health's website.

**Senator Michelle Hinchey** said, "After nearly a decade of searching for TBI care, Hannah and Katherine Berryan came to my office for help when leaving the Hudson Valley became their only option in order to get Hannah the specialized care she needed—a path no family in our community should ever have to take. Katherine and Hannah's fight to access local TBI services became a fight that my office took on alongside them through new legislation aimed at creating change. I'm proud that our bill, which authorizes the first statewide review of TBI care in New York, has been signed into law because we know it will shine a light on how we need to help people with this complex disability live the best quality of life possible. I'm honored to work with Katherine and Hannah to move this important issue forward and help families like them facing roadblocks to TBI care get the services they deserve."

**Katherine Beryan, TBI Advocate and Regional Lead Transition and Peer Specialist for the Independent Living Center of the Hudson Valley** said, "I want to thank Senator Hinchey for her steadfast dedication and compassion in the passing of Hannah's bill. This bill will now bring optics, clarity, and substantiation to the underserved brain injury population in New York

State. For over ten years, Hannah has not been able to obtain the medically necessary treatments needed to thrive because New York does not adequately service or support people with Traumatic Brain Injuries. This bill is the first step in righting what is happening to all people in New York State with brain injuries. Hannah and I are honored to represent this population, and we have dedicated our lives to serve as a beacon of hope for all TBI survivors and their families.”

**Christina Lebeau, Director of Advocacy and Engagement at the Brain Injury Association of New York State**, said, “This law marks a significant step toward ensuring that every New Yorker with a TBI can access the care they need without leaving their community. I thank Senator Hinchey for her tireless advocacy for individuals impacted by brain injury and Governor Hochul for signing this critical legislation into law. As a member of the Traumatic Brain Injury Services Coordinating Council, I look forward to contributing to building a stronger, more inclusive system for essential care. The Brain Injury Association of New York State remains committed to supporting, educating, and advocating for people and families affected by brain injury.”

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